

What is a Section Corner and why is it monumented?

Our forefathers introduced the Public Land Survey System (PLSS) into the state of Utah, dividing the state into 1-mile squares known as sections. These sections contain 640 acres and are used to control the location of our property rights; such as utility easements, road rights-of-way, and property boundary locations.

Prior to land being divided and sold to individuals, Government surveyors set monuments to mark the locations of these sections. These monuments are often referred to as “Section Corners”.



Who maintains these monuments and how are they monumented?

The B.L.M. employs surveyors that maintain section corners controlling federal lands. However, maintenance of corners controlling private and state lands was assigned to the States by the federal government. The States then statutorily passed the responsibility to the Counties.

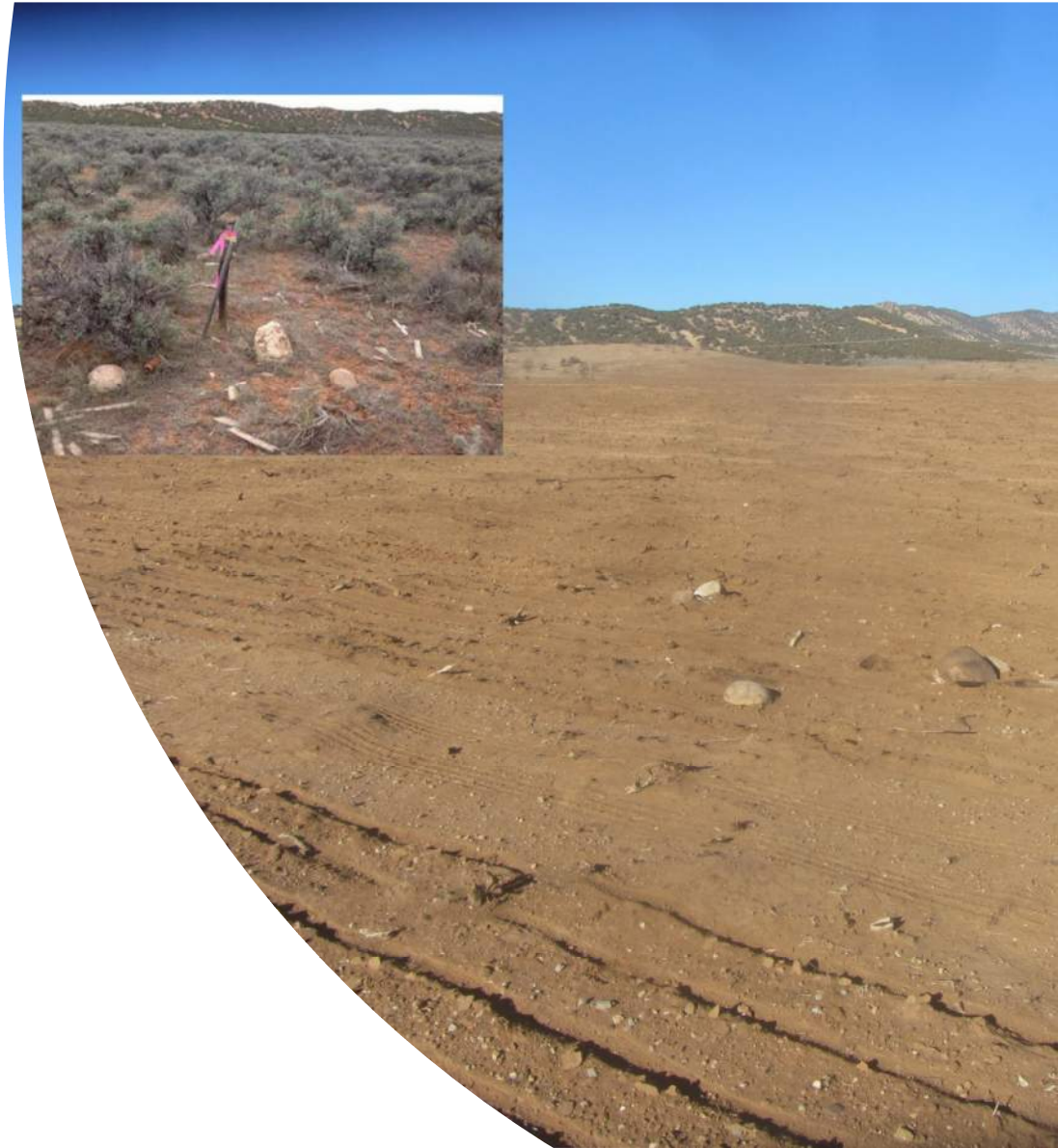
Around the year 1910 County surveyors started using metallic materials to monument section corners. These monuments are highly durable and have a high recovery rate. Prior to that time stones, pits, wood posts and "X" chiseled in stone faces were often used as monuments. The older form of monuments have a significantly lower recovery rate than the metal monuments used today.



Why do these monuments need maintenance?

The PLSS is in danger of being lost as:

- Older Monuments deteriorate over time.
- Monuments are destroyed by construction, development and the expansion of infrastructure
- Wildfires and other natural disasters destroy monuments and their accessories.
- Mitigation projects, such as chaining and re-planting efforts damage and obliterate monuments.



The Value of proactively protecting the Public Land Survey System.

The cost to locate and rehabilitate a previously undocumented monument increases exponentially after it has been lost. Because of this it is vital that we are proactive in locating and protecting monuments before they are disturbed or destroyed.

Once a section corners position is lost, it's replacement monument is determined mathematically by proportionate methods. Not only is this process more expensive, but it can also result in the repositioning of deed lines and ownership. This can cause disputes and possible litigation between landowners.



How these funds help protect our Section Corners.

To address these issues the Monument Replacement and Restoration Committee (MRRC) was established and funded by the legislature through legislation in 2015.

After a review process, the MRRC uses these funds to finance projects proposed by Counties within Utah. These projects are focused around locating, rehabilitating and gathering data on section corners within a proposed area.

After the project is completed, Counties provide plats, tie sheets and geographical data that will forever perpetuate the location of the section corners. This data is stored with individual counties and with the Utah Geospatial Resource Center (UGRC). This ultimately saves time and money if monuments are disturbed or lost after being documented.

